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DEPOSITORY

Video Conferencing

D101.2:

Videoconferencing—a new tool for leaders

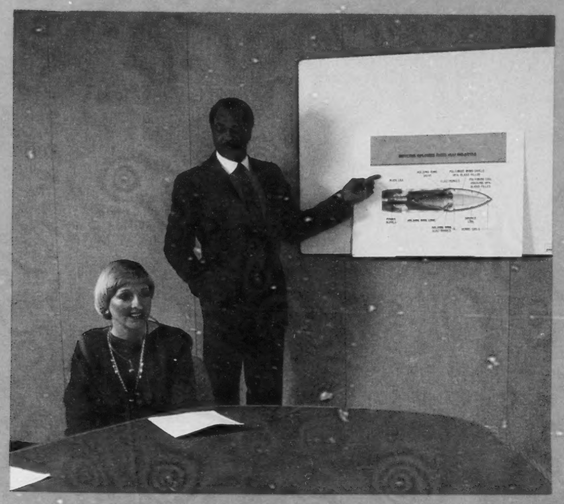
Now you can set up meetings and conferences with your colleagues throughout the AMC major subordinate commands, without wasting time, money, and energy on getting from place to place. Videoconferencing gives you all the advantages of a face-to-face conference, plus some options that most meetings lack.

What is videoconferencing?

Videoconferencing is a major advance over the traditional conference call—it allows both verbal and visual conferences over distance, through a system of audio and video links between specially equipped studios. In the AMC system, there are studios at each of the major subordinate commands of AMC. Each studio has six audio microphones and two full-color video monitors—an incoming monitor that shows you the images coming from the distant conference room, and a display monitor that shows you what you are sending out.

Videoconferencing is a new technology, and many organizations are only just beginning to set up networks; AMC's VENUS network is the first of its kind in operation in DoD. Eventually, the Defense Commercial Telecommunications Network will include Air Force and Navy subsystems. In fact, interoperability standards are in the works for DoD; thus, in principle, when these networks do materialize, it will be feasible to link them together.

VENUS offers greatly increased flexibility in planning and scheduling meetings—the opportunity not only for more regular meetings, but also for reducing the cost and time needed for travel. The result: improved communication among the far-flung elements of AMC.



You can use the drymark easel at the side of the studio for chalkboard, flip-chart, or poster presentations.

VENUS—Video ENhanced Users System: AMC's new videoconferencing network

First in DoD and another way for AMC to provide leaders the decisive edge.

Each studio contains an array of equipment arranged conveniently around a conference table set up for six active participants; there is also a gallery behind the table for 6 to 10 other people.

What can I do in a videoconference?

With the videoconferencing system, you can do everything that you could do in person—except shake hands.

- You can communicate directly with your colleagues, taking advantage of all the visual and oral cues available in face-to-face conversation.
  A voice-activated camera focuses on the person speaking, and a picture of that person is automatically projected on a monitor screen.

- You can show vugraphs.
  A graphics display unit—a light box mounted in the conference table—allows you to transmit pictures of printed documents, flat artwork, transparencies, and even three-dimensional objects.

- You can transmit video recordings.
  A video cassette recorder is available so that you can view and send video recordings during the meeting.

- You can make a chalkboard or flip-chart presentation.
  The conference room includes a drymark easel, which is placed near a remote-control panel that allows the presenter to control the cameras and other equipment.

- You can show slides.
  A 35-mm slide projector can be operated from either of two control panels.

- You and your colleagues can get paper copies of anything under discussion.
  A hard-copy machine can produce a black and white paper copy of any image displayed on the incoming monitor.

- You can securely discuss topics classified up to Secret.
  Each conference room is completely shielded, and the transmissions can be encrypted.

With the videoconferencing system, you can also do things that you could not easily do in a live conference—

- You can use the video cassette recorder to record the whole meeting for future reference.

- You can use the hard-copy machine to get pictures of your colleagues along with their displays.

- You can monitor your own performance as you do your presentation—the display monitor shows you exactly what your distant colleagues are seeing.

How many can participate?

The network allows a direct link between two conference rooms at a time, but more stations can be accommodated with the multipoint option.

When only two studios are linked, each party is both sender and receiver: you see your own image on the incoming monitor and the other studio's image on the display monitor. In a multipoint setup, however, one of the studios moderates the meeting, controling the images shown on the monitors.

At a multipoint videoconference, all studios can speak to and hear each other, and all see the same display on their two monitors. However, one video monitor always displays images from the moderator's studio, and so only one other studio at a time can transmit a video display to the second monitor.

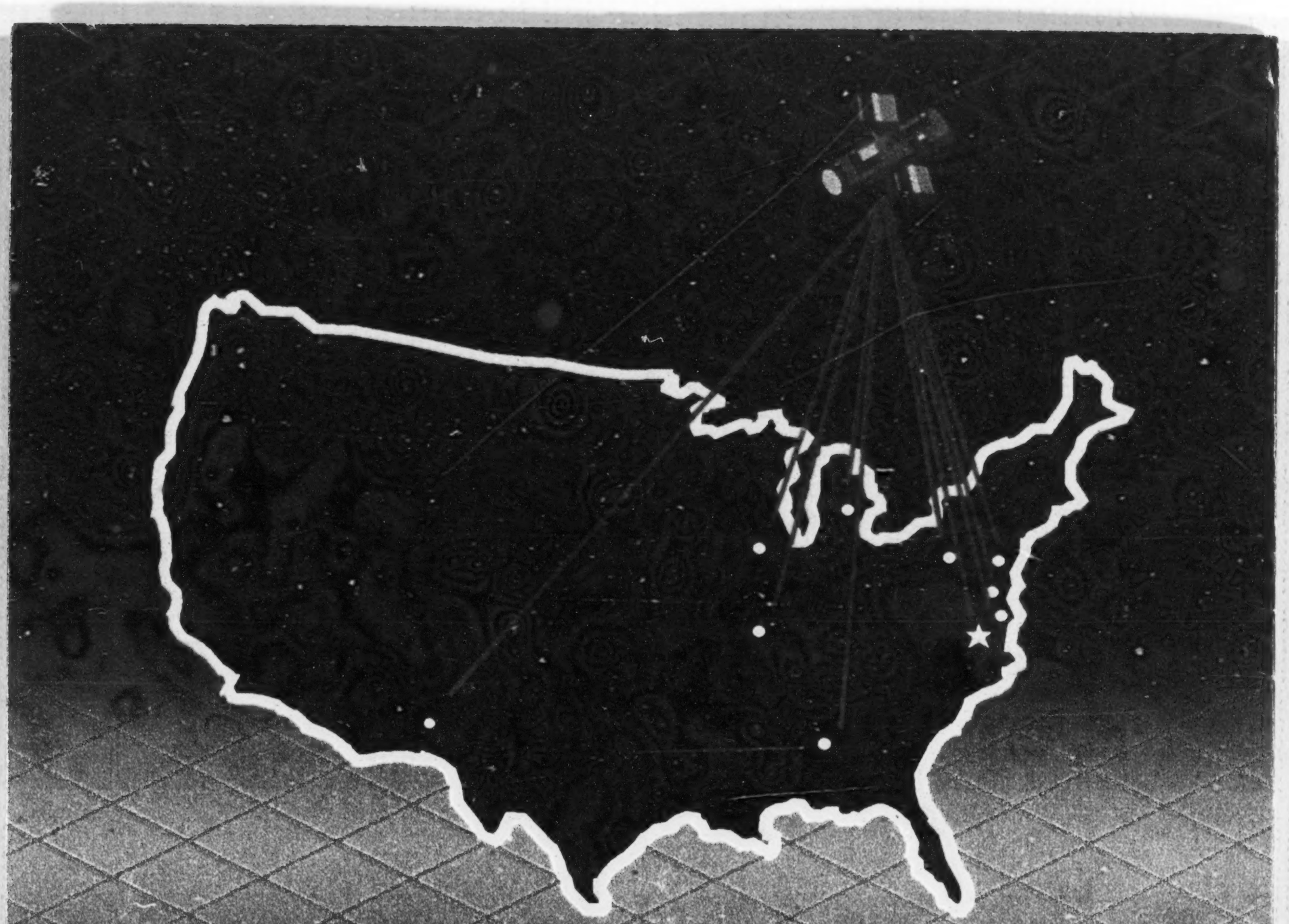
Thus, if you are moderating a multipoint meeting, you control turntaking among the other studios for the use of the video display. Other stations signal you electronically when they wish to transmit video, and you "recognize" a station by allowing its images to be displayed.

There is also an audio add-on telephone that allows people at other locations to be included in a teleconference, by voice only. Such outside callers can hear and be heard in all conference rooms. The audio add-on is not secure, however, so this option can be used at unclassified conferences only.

For technical help

Each studio in the VENUS network has a Conference Facilitator who can help with technical questions concerning the equipment and how best to use it. The Facilitator can run the equipment for you and help you learn how to run it yourself. (A list of telephone numbers for all the AMC studios is given on the back of this brochure.)

The control panel in the conference table allows you to control the cameras and other equipment.



★ **AMC HQ** Studio A
Alexandria, VA
(AV) 284-4438
(202) 274-4438

★ **AMC HQ** Studio B
(AV) 284-4439
(202) 274-4439

AMCCOM
Rock Island, IL
(AV) 793-3629
(309) 782-3629

AVSCOM/
TROSCOM
St. Louis, MO
(AV) 694-1849
(314) 263-1849

CECOM
Ft. Monmouth, NJ
(AV) 992-7080
(201) 532-7080

DESCOM
Letterkenny, PA
(AV) 570-5342
(717) 267-5342

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Adelphi, MD
(AV) 290-4220
(202) 394-4220

MICOM
Huntsville, AL
(AV) 746-5104
(205) 876-5104

TACOM
Warren, MI
(AV) 786-6700
(313) 574-6700

TECOM
Aberdeen, MD
(AV) 298-2793
(301) 278-2793

White Sands
Missile Range, NM
(AV) 284-4438
(202) 274-4438

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